

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 were pending in the patent application. Applicants submit herein amendments to the Specification and the Claims. Authorization is hereby given to charge Deposit Account 50-0510 for introduction of a new independent claim.

The Examiner has objected to the Specification; has rejected Claims 5-13 under 35 USC 112 for informalities; has rejected Claims 1-3 under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by Heddes; has rejected Claim 4 under 35 USC 103 as unpatentable over the teachings of Heddes in view of Mustafa; has rejected Claim 13 under 35 USC 103 as unpatentable over Heddes in view of Chiussi; and has indicated that Claims 14-16 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

By this amendment, Applicants have amended the Specification at page 10 to insert that "multicast vector" language which was disclosed originally in Claim 2. To address the Examiner's concern with the "almost full" language from Claims 5, 9 and 10, Applicants have amended the language to recite a "predetermined threshold condition" which finds support in the Specification, for example on page 8, lines 17-27. In correcting the spelling error of "pretermined threshold" for Claims 6, 11 and 12, Applicants have amended that claim language to recite "predetermined output queue

CH919990015

-12-

threshold" to distinguish it from the predetermined shared memory threshold of Claims 5, 9 and 10.

In response to the objection to Claim 13, Applicants respectfully traverse the objection. The Examiner has stated that there is a contradiction between the recitation of the "two recited cells". Applicants are not reciting two contradictory cells. Rather, Applicants are providing a method and apparatus for a fixed-length cell routing switch to handle variable-length cell traffic. There are not two cells, there is one cell routing switch and there is cell traffic which is to be transmitted via that routing switch. Applicants respectfully assert that both fixed-length cell routing switches and variable-length cell traffic are known in the art, as evidenced by the teachings of the Heddes patent cited by the Examiner. Heddes teaches that user frames must be converted into fixed-length cells in order to be handled by the switch fabric (see: e.g., the Abstract). Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejection of the language of Claim 13. Applicants also note that Claim 13 has been canceled; although the language from Claim 13 has been inserted by amendment to both Claim 14 and Claim 16 to place those claims in condition for allowance.

In response to the objection to Claims 5-12 for having multiple dependent claims depending from multiple dependent claims, Applicants have amended the remaining offending claims to all depend only from one claim each.

The Examiner has indicated that Claims 14-16 recite allowable subject matter. By this amendment, Applicants have amended both Claim 14 and Claim 16 into independent

CH919990015

-13-

format to place those claims in condition for allowance. Similarly, Claim 1 has been amended to include parallel limitations to those found in Claims 14 and 16. Applicants believe that the amendments to Claim 1 place it in condition for allowance, and place all of the remaining claims, Claims 2-12 which depend directly or indirectly from Claim 1, in condition for allowance as well.

Based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request entry of the amendments, reconsideration of the objections and rejections, and issuance of the remaining claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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CH919990015

-14-